



Strategic Networking Assistance Program

The State of SNAP

Throughout April and May, LEA's conducted a SNAP survey to gauge the level of interest and value of the program within their Posts. At this time, 13 posts have reported their data, for a total of **520 respondents**. Participating posts include: Almaty, Amman, Berlin, Budapest, Cairo, Frankfurt, Geneva, London, Mexico City, Pretoria, San José, San Salvador, and Seoul.

The results at this time are high-level without an in-depth analysis. However, these results provide useful information to provide a snapshot in time.

High Level Survey Results with 13 Posts reporting:

Posts conducted two different surveys:

1. Survey for USG Employees
2. Survey for Spouses

Included within the surveys was demographic information including time in agency as well as marital status. At this time, data has only been analyzed at the aggregate level.

Please note that the numbers may not all compute/foot correctly. Some respondents did not answer all questions. Other respondents may have provided additional answers.

Overall, 93% of total respondents felt that it was very important or important to expand the program.

Results for **employee and spouse surveys combined** are as follows:

Respondents: 520

Question/Category	Yes	No		Percentage
Heard of SNAP	448	72		86%
Spouses interested in Working	222	214	26 tandem	51%
- pursuing other interests	19			
- wants to enjoy country	13			
- staying at home with children	18			
- home schooling	2			
- prefers to work at Embassy	22			
- other	15			
Value SNAP Offers¹:				
Post Morale	289			56%
Recruit FS Employees	116			22%
Retain FS Employees	182			35%
Minimize Curtailments	134			26%
Address needs of family members	354			68%
Enhances Experience at Post	214			41%
	Very Important	Important	Not very Important	% Imp. Or very Imp
Should SNAP continue at Post?²	281	152	57	88%
Should SNAP expand to other Posts?	310	151	35	93%
	Very Influential	Somewhat Influential	Not Influential	Very or Somewhat
Will SNAP influence bidding decision?	117	161	158	64%

¹A number of respondents did not answer all questions. Especially those questions with lists.

²The question was phrased as, "How important is it to *you* to see it continue here? A number of respondents planning to leave post responded that continuing the program at that particular post was not important to *them*.

Results for the **employee survey** are as follows:

Respondents: 254

Question/Category	Yes	No	Comments	Percentage
Heard of SNAP	213	41		84%
Spouses interested in Working	87	92	26 tandem	49%
- pursuing other interests	19			
- wants to enjoy country	13			
- staying at home with children	18			
- home schooling	2			
- prefers to work at Embassy	22			
- other	15			
Value SNAP Offers:				
Post Morale	172			68%
Recruit FS Employees	78			31%
Retain FS Employees	104			41%
Minimize Curtailments	71			28%
Address needs of family members	186			73%
Enhances Experience at Post	121			48%
Other	14			5%
	Very Important	Important	Not very Important	
Should SNAP continue at Post?	127	72	36	85%
Should SNAP expand to other Posts?	149	77	20	92%
	Very Influential	Somewhat Influential	Not Influential	
Will SNAP influence bidding decision?	60	69	91	59%

Results for the **spouse survey** are as follows:

Respondents: 266

Question/Category	Yes	No	Comments	Percentage
Heard of SNAP	235	31		88%
Spouses interested in Working	135	122		53%
- prefers to work at Embassy	33			
- pursuing other interests	20			
- wants to enjoy country	24			
- staying at home with children	28			
- home schooling	1			
- other	37			
	Yes	No	Comments	
Used SNAP services – spouses interested in working	118	148	135 interested	87%
Used SNAP services – all spouses responding	118	148	266 responding	44%
Usage of Services	Used	Future		
- Career Coaching	39	73		
- Creating a Portable Career	14	82		
- Finding P/T work	49	95		
- Finding F/T work	39	88		
- Resume/CV assistance	49	79		
- Educational opportunities	18	88		
- Interviewing skills	28	73		
- Networking	45	95		
- SNAP resource library	22	83		
- Self Assessments	14	65		
- Home-based business	9	47		
- Volunteering information	21	77		
- Local tax information	21	81		
- Work Permits	15	61		

Question/Category	Yes	No	Comments	Percentage
Value SNAP Offers:				Percentage
Long term continuity	125			47%
Professional skills	94			35%
Post Morale	117			44%
Recruit FS Employees	38			14%
Retain FS Employees	78			29%
Minimize Curtailments	63			24%
S/T employment	160			60%
Volunteering	108			41%
Further education	98			37%
Address needs of family members	168			63%
Enhances Experience at Post	93			35%
Other	21			7%
	Very Important	Important	Not very Important	
Should SNAP continue at Post?	154	80	21	92%
Should SNAP expand to other Posts?	161	74	15	94%
	Very Influential	Somewhat Influential	Not Influential	
Will SNAP influence bidding decision?	57	92	67	69%

Respondents were also asked to provide additional comments. The following comments are quotes that have been extracted from a large number of comments. These comments are representative of similar responses received. Virtually every Post complimented its LEA by name.

- This is a vital program for recruitment and retaining FSO's. It will also provide the Embassy with added linkages to the private sector in-country.
- I think the scheme is particularly helpful to people on shorter postings – e.g., 2 year JO tours. By having a lot of the job search legwork done, spouses on shorter postings have a realistic chance of obtaining work during their tour (and preferably at an early stage). This is important because I think many families decide during the first two year tours whether or not to remain with the Foreign Service. Having the SNAP scheme is definitely a boost for morale (particularly for the accompanying spouse) and ultimately I believe this will achieve higher staff retention for the State Dept.

- Although SNAP probably would not be of interest to me, I can see that it would be a very important service for spouses who are interested in working and would make a very positive (spouse of Ambassador)
- I just wish SNAP was here when I arrived here. I know SNAP would have opened many doors for me in multinational companies.
- From my perspective, SNAP is the answer to the question that pops up continually in one form or another: "When will the FS stop treating spouses and other dependents like second-class citizens?" SNAP improves morale of employees and their families by offering accompanying family members a vehicle to pursue their professional interests in a serious way, something that has long been a shortfall for these family members.
- I think that this is a must at all posts that have a sizeable local economy that can afford expatriate labor.
- I plan to use SNAP resources at all future posts. The existence of a SNAP position will be a critical component of our bidding decisions. The SNAP position not only enhances the lives of USG spouses, but also enhances Post morale.
- As hard as it is for female spouses who cannot find employment (many of whom have left high-powered careers to follow their husbands to post), I have to think that in many cases it is even harder for dependent husbands - due to the lack of validation and support for the choice for men to stay home. Therefore I would think that efforts like the SNAP initiative are not only important in general terms, they are particularly important for the retention of female officers.
- If a family doesn't enjoy being enriched by experiencing a foreign country first-hand, they need to find another career. A Walmart welcomer for example. (one of less than five negative quotes)
- SNAP has filled a much-needed facet for spouses to thrive in their posts. It has made the difference between having an effective system for finding work opportunities as opposed to "shooting in the dark". I'm grateful for this service, even if I don't need it all the time. I think it sends a positive message that management is concerned about spouses finding employment and that they are willing to put out the resources to help them do so.
- If spouses (and adult family members) who want to work can obtain work through SNAP, then they are happy, the employee is happy, and morale is greater in both of their workplaces. In addition, when both employee and spouse are satisfied with their working situation, there is less of a chance they will curtail, and in many cases may consider an extension at post (thereby cutting moving costs for the Dept.). My extension because Tex was happy with his work is a perfect example.
- The SNAP is only as good as the SNAP coordinator who runs it at any given post
- Making spouses feel appreciated improves community morale - this program helps recognize that spouses are valuable people who have given up much to accompany their FS members on assignments abroad.
- Absolutely necessary, should be a full time position.

- I think it is important for the State Dept. retaining their employees for spouses to be employed if they want to be.
- It will (influence your decision to take this post) for future postings.
- It makes me feel that the interests of spouses are recognized and valued.
- Absolutely necessary.
- Any resource supporting spouse employment overseas will be of growing importance
- I would like to see it evolve into a more powerful and integrated job-placement program, empowered to work closely with big American businesses abroad and the embassy itself in making sure that every spouse/MOH finds a place to contribute.”
- This program is extremely important for the morale of spouses.
- This attempt to solve a growing problem for overseas USG families was long overdue. I am sure that much can be learned from the pilot effort to improve SNAP but it is a good start. From a morale point of view, the program represents a relatively low-cost way for DoS to show it actually cares about the welfare of its employees’ family situations. Over the long run, this sort of program will work to the benefit of both employer and employee.
- This is a service that a value cannot be placed on. Spouses need to work (if they choose) and this is an important program.
- It’s an amazing resource. My time here in Cairo has improved dramatically because of it, and its amazing coordinator, Bethany Singer. We’re blessed to count her among us.
- I struggled and always after many headaches found a job. For me, having SNAP in a post was a dream. For our next post, the existence of SNAP will be a very important of our decision. I am a strong advocate of having SNAP at each post.
- Great to have SNAP in Budapest!
- I think the SNAP program is a fantastic idea and the pilot program here is very active. The workshops on resume/CV writing, networking, and interview skills were invaluable. If I were staying at the post, I would definitely continue to utilize SNAP’s services. I hope it continues here as well as worldwide for a long time to come.
- Program is useful, on target and long overdue! Good luck with it!
- It is a very worthwhile program. Just because my circumstances don’t require SNAP services does not mean it is not needed by others.
- To be fully successful in this country and others SNAP should encourage the Embassy to negotiate a BWA with the local government. The U.S. does not have a BWA with Germany. As a result, in a country as bureaucratic as this, many hours are spent in German tax, aliens and other offices.
- My wife and I consider employment potential for me as one of the two main factors on every bid for a new posting.
- There should be more publicity among the embassy community about SNAP. I had not heard of it before arriving in Korea.
- I think it fills a serious need for spouses. I have met many spouses who are frustrated by employment issues

- Very helpful program. Please expand it to other posts.
- Keep up the fantastic work. I look forward to more outstanding efforts in the future. – Good Luck!!!
- As a single person, I won't be using it. If I was married, it would be influential.
- It's great and we want you to stay. Thank God you are here, if only to keep my husband from going nuts.
- Yes my partner is interested in SNAP services, but: I am not married and at post with a partner whom the Department considers a "member of household" (MOH) and, therefore, not qualified for this program.
- More importantly, as they begin to see that a number of good officers are leaving the service in favor of an employer that is more open to the needs of their personal lives and families (already 2 in my orientation class of 44!), they will have to make changes.
- I am at the end of my "career" but could see SNAP as extremely valuable to give direction to family members at the beginning of their FS careers.
- As a spouse with a non-tandem career I am very happy to see the department beginning to address the issues of dual career couples by providing services like SNAP.
- I think it is so important for the embassy to recognize the role of spouses and show that it is important that spouses are employed and happy. The SNAP office is the literal translation of this policy and I fully support what the LEA does – it is a tough job; a lot of spouses either have work or don't want it, but as new families arrive at post the more valuable the SNAP services will be – when I first arrived I wish we had a fully operational SNAP office because it would have helped me quite a bit in my job search.
- I also think SNAP would be useful to families before they arrive at post
- I sincerely hope the position remains and becomes a major source of employment referrals.
- Anything that normalizes family life at post is beneficial.
- SNAP has been incredibly helpful to employees in my office; the ability to reach out into the local job market and reach into the post's skill pool to find employment matches on a permanent basis is incredibly useful and has done much to move my employees down their chosen career paths and mitigating the challenges of finding a job overseas.

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